

# THREE COUNT<sup>©</sup>

Volume 1, Number 28

March 31, 1992

## WWF Airs Hogan Tribute

By ALEX MARVEZ  
Three Count Editor

The end of the Hulk Hogan era in the World Wrestling Federation drew ever closer March 29 with the airing of a Hogan tribute show on the March to Wrestlemania VIII telecast on USA Network.

When Hogan wrestles Sid Justice at WM VIII April 5, there is a chance it will be the Hulkster's final WWF appearance. In all likelihood, Hogan will return to the WWF by next year's Wrestlemania for a pay-per-view show. But a full-time return to the road is doubtful.

Hogan is taking an indefinite leave from the WWF after April 5 to vacation and concentrate on movie projects. But with allegations by former WWF wrestlers that Hogan used cocaine and anabolic steroids, the Hulkster may have to take a permanent hiatus. Hulk is expected to begin wrestling for New Japan Pro Wrestling later this year after signing a two-year, \$1.2 million contract that would call for six appearances a year.

A few notes before the summary of the USA Network show. WWF owner Vince McMahon served as the tuxedo-clad host, walking around a dark studio with poster-sized photos of Hogan hanging throughout.

1) The tribute began by showing the main event of WM III, where Hogan pinned Andre the Giant. Andre looked like Jushin Lyger in this match as compared to how he wrestles nowadays. There was a new commentary track implemented for the WM matches, with Gorilla Monsoon and Bobby Heenan handling the announcing chores. The sound mixing with the crowd noise from the WM matches was so good you couldn't tell the sound had been redubbed. After watching WCW's Main Event an hour prior to the start of this show, effective sound dubbing and good commentary is something that promo



Highlights of Hulk Hogan's victory over Andre the Giant at Wrestlemania III were shown March 29 on a tribute show to the Hulkster.

## Luger on WBF 'Stars'

By ALEX MARVEZ  
Three Count Editor

Former World Championship Wrestling champion Lex Luger makes his debut in the World Bodybuilding Federation April 5 on the promotion's inaugural Body Stars telecast (USA Network, 11 a.m. EST).

Luger, who left WCW after dropping the group's championship February 29 to Sting, appeared on World Wrestling Federation telecasts this past weekend. Both the WWF and WBF are owed by Vince McMahon.

Luger was released from his WCW contract before its 1993 release date with the condition he cannot wrestle for another promotion. Thus, it appears WCW is helpless from keeping Luger off WWF telecasts by linking him with the WBF.

Such a move prompted WCW executive vice president Kip Frey to label the WWF's as "slimeballs" March 29 on Rich Mancuso's wrestling radio show on WFAN.

## Briefly...

• **Petrick gone:** Jack Petrick is no longer the president of World Championship Wrestling, having turned the position over March 30 to become president of Ted Turner's all-cartoon network, which begins this fall. Petrick served as president of the group since Turner purchased Jim Crockett Promotions in 1988.

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# WWF Telecasts Hogan Tribute

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tion desperately needs.

A recap of the Justice-Hogan feud was then shown, including the redubbed Royal Rumble footage. A 20-second squash match between Hercules and Justice was also shown. Hercules wouldn't sell at all, and after getting pinned with the power bomb (blatantly protecting himself from injury in the process), he jumped almost immediately to his feet.

2) **Shawn Michaels** defeated **Roddy Piper** via disqualification in a match taped in February in Biloxi, Miss. The blatant name-dropping of previous WM celebrities continued in this match (presumably because they have no mainstream stars at this year's). When the name of **Mr. T** was brought up (Piper's opponent from WM II in a boxing match), Monsoon said, "(Piper) flattened the bum." The finish came when Piper attempted to bulldog Michaels but was thrown into referee **Hebner**. **Sensational Sherri** tossed Michaels her boot, which she used to level Piper. As Piper and the referee revived, **Bret Hart** came to ringside and tossed Piper the boot. Piper took a wild swing at Michaels and missed, which the referee saw and signalled a disqualification. Piper and Hart then had a staredown, with Piper telling Hart to stay out of his business. Good match.

Then came a summary of the **Ric Flair-Randy Savage** angle. **Three Count** reader **John Patton**, who I watched the show with, said this angle -- an original one which he never got in WCW -- shows just how effective Flair can be. A squash match was then shown with Flair defeating **Jim Brunzell**. After the squash, an interview was shown with **McMahon** at the house of **Elizabeth**. **Liz** denied the photos were of Flair and her, and said the Nature Boy had somehow gotten the negatives and

doctored the photos. Then began the first of many lines that subtly refer to the problems the WWF has had with allegations of homosexual activities and steroid abuse among its employees.

3) **The Ultimate Warrior** defeated Hogan in the main event match of WM VI. I still don't know why this match was shown. No overt reference to the Warrior was made (indicating there is little chance of him returning), yet why show a match on a tribute show where Hogan loses? Two great lines in this match. Heenan referring to the Flair photo situation (yet inferring so much more): "You can't just make allegations about people without proof, because you end up looking like an idiot." Monsoon on Hogan: "Hulk speaks the truth." While the match itself was good, it lost much of its flavor from the original 1990 air date.

Another summary of a WWF feud followed. The **Jake Roberts-Undertaker** feud was highlighted, with a fresh clip of Roberts squashing **Jim Powers** with a DDT. A squash match of **The Natural Disasters** topping **Kato** and **Barry Horowitz** also aired. I am convinced **The Earthquake** is **Skinner's** older brother.

The show concluded with a calm, effective in-studio interview of Hogan by **McMahon**. Two things stood out from Hogan's ramblings about Justice: The glazed look in Hogan's eyes and how old McMahon has looked within the past few weeks. As far as retirement goes, Hogan said he "just won't know until he came out of the ring."

## Sheet Spotlight

Here's a look at the top stories of some of the other wrestling newsletters, with subscription information:

- **Dave Meltzer's Wrestling Observer Newsletter** (March 30): Chock full of monstrous reports on Mexican, Japan, USWA, Portland, Global, WCW and WWF circuits. The most news-filled Observer with pure wrestling news in quite a while. Weekly; \$1.50 an issue. P.O. Box 1228, Campbell CA 95009-1228.

- **Wade Keller's Pro Wrestling Torch** (March 19): Stories on **Jesse Ventura's** problems with **KFAN** radio, **WCW** referee **Nick Patrick** getting injured in a car accident and **Craig Johnson** being released as **Global** announcer. Also loaded. Weekly; \$1.25 an issue (Free sample available). P.O. Box 201844, Minneapolis MN 55420.

- **Mike Sawyer's Legdrop** (March 24): A new interview with **Barry Orton** about the **Donahue** show on the WWF; Summaries of news stories about homosexuality and the WWF. Weekly; \$1.25 an issue. 831 Pasadena Ave., Niagra Falls, NY 14304..

- **Ron Lemieux's Arena Report** (March 23): Live report from an IWF show March 21 in Winter Haven and correspondent reports; Excellent editorial by **Mike Gunter** about how wrestling killed his marriage; . Bi-weekly; \$1 an issue. P.O. Box 952547, Lake Mary, FL 32795-2547.

## THREE COUNT®

**Alex Marvez**..... Editor/Publisher  
**Carol Hernandez**..... Production  
**Paul Hanlin Jr.**..... Columnist  
**Carlos Rey**..... Lucha Libre  
**John Muse**..... Japan

*Three Count is a weekly professional wrestling newsletter published every Tuesday. Price for subscription is \$6 for one month, \$18 for three months, \$33 for six months and \$66 for one year. Please address all subscription checks to Three Count at P.O. Box 12795, Gainesville, Fla., 32604-0795.*

# Hogan in Battle Over Historic Belleair House

By ALEX MARVEZ  
Three Count Editor

A historic house once owned by the son of a former vice president is in jeopardy of being demolished by World Wrestling Federation superstar Hulk Hogan.

A March 26 article in The Tampa Tribune chronicles the battle between historic preservationists and Hogan (Terry Bollea) to keep the house intact. The name of the property is "Casa De Solena," a spacious two-story home in Belleair, Fla, a suburb of Tampa. Hogan, who already owns several condominiums along Pinellas County beaches and a home near Cas De Solena, bought the house last month for approximately \$1.2 million.

"I bought the house with hopes of restoring it," said Linda Bollea, the wife of The Hulkster. "The fact that Hulk Hogan is doing it makes people think, 'Oh, they get money and this is what they do.'"

Linda Bollea said architects and collectors maintain the house is too dilapidated to make restoration feasible. But members of the Clearwater Historical Society plan to challenge the Bollea's plans.

"It's just a marvelous example of Mediterranean revival architecture," said CHS Vice President Mike Sanders. "We're down to just a few of these structures."

The namesake son of U.S. Vice President Garret Augustus Hobart built the house in 1931 as a winter retreat. The architectural style was in vogue between world wars when wealthy families sought to create a "fantasy land of Spanish castles and Venetian Plazzos," according to Sanders.

The Tribune reports Belleair city officials are drafting a historic preservation ordinance, but it won't be considered in time to save the Casa De Solena, said town manager Steve Papalas.

Sonny Glassbrenner, the contractor handling the demolition, said, "I feel kind of guilty about it. George Washington had his historic wooden teeth, but if you had them, would you want to wear them?"

## Briefly...

(Continued from Page 1)

The new WCW president is Bob Dhue, who was the head of Atlanta Colliseum, Inc. (the Turner subdivision that operates the Omni). Dhue also oversaw the operations of TicketMaster, the ticket distribution company of which Turner owns 30 percent. Dhue, whose age has been estimated in the early 40s, is the son-in-law of a former Omni building manager.

The change is not expected to bring about any wholesale changes in WCW's product, although one company employee told me Dhue is a lot more similar to WCW executive vice president Kip Frey than Petrick or former VP Jim Herd.

• **Steroid Talk:** *Three Count* reader Dory De Quatro is conducting a major news conference in New York City March 31 with former wrestlers Jim Wilson, Bruno Sammartino and David Shults expected to attend. The expected topics of discussion are homosexual harassment and anabolic steroids in wrestling. Dr. Mike Lano will also be appearing to speak about a lack of medical coverage in wrestling. Representatives from *A Current Affair*, *Hard Copy* and *CBS Evening News* are also slated to film excerpts.

• **WWF Steroid Free?:** The World Wrestling Federation held a "steroid seminar" for selected members of the mainstream media March 24 in New York City. The group announced it would institute an "unbeatable" steroid test in May, administered by steroid expert Mauro DiPasquale. More details next week, but this appears to be another WWF hoax.

• **WCW Road Warriors:** WCW will begin running "C-team" shows through the state of Georgia beginning in late April. The shows will be comprised of some of the younger members of WCW's talent roster, like Marcus Alexnader Bagwell, The Patriots and Vinnie Vegas. The cards are being more to give wrestlers experience than for profit. Some of the projected towns include Cordele and Athens. Reportedly, Terry "Magnum T.A." Allen was suggesting this for more than a year.

• **Rhodes injured:** Dustin Rhodes injured a disc in his back two weeks ago, and won't return to action until WCW's April 5 show in Jacksonville.

• **Hughes, Hammer in Rehab:** Van Hammer and Curtis Hughes have entered voluntary drug rehabilitation programs. J.T. Southern, who was brought in to feud with Hammer, will instead work a program with The Freebirds.

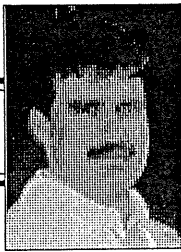
• **NWA Title Returns:** John Muse says New Japan Pro Wrestling will conduct a tournament in August to crown a National Wrestling Alliance champion. Expect Sting, Rick Rude, Rick-Scott Steiner, Big Van Vader, Keiji Muto, Tatsumi Fujinami, Riki Choshu and several others to participate.

• **UCW Forms:** The New England-based Universal Championship Wrestling promotion debuts May 1 with a television taping in Nashua, NH. For more information, call 603-888-4516.

# Japan-style Deserves Chance in U.S.

*Dr. Mike Lano, an Alameda, Calif., resident and long-time wrestling fan, traveled to Miami March 20 to attend the U.S. debut of the Pro Wrestling Fujiwara shoot-fighting group. Shoot-fighting combines amateur wrestling, kick boxing and karate into a style that is extremely popular among many Japanese wrestling fans. **Three Count** asked Lano to write a column espousing his views on the show and on whether Japanese-style wrestling can gain popularity in the U.S.*

## Dr. Mike Lano



The difference in crowd reaction at this show as compared to shoot-fighting-style shows in Japan was immense. Many of the fans didn't know the names of the competitors at all, and it wasn't their fault they didn't pop like the Japanese would at the mere mention of Yoshiaki Fujiwara or Masaharu Funaki. What I noted is something you've read in newsletters year in and year out. American fans simply need time to get educated to the style for its popularity to grow.

Yet U.S. fans may still never react as Japanese or Mexican fans would to the same product. The Japanese often are silent and intense for the mainstream Japanese wrestling groups, while Mexican fans usually react loudly for the main events and new creative moves. We don't have some of the cultural aspects of the Japanese or Mexican culture ingrained from birth. We are more vocal than the stereotypical "quiet" Japanese, and we throw fewer objects in pleasure (like coins or dollar bills) or disgust (like rocks, paper, etc.) than the Mexicans do after an emotional in-ring decision. At least no "fingers" were tossed at the March 20th show, as many of us have seen at our beloved independent cards. Come to think of it, are there any little old ladies of the "Hatpin Mary" variety that used to jab heels in New York, Los Angeles and Houston? Has the McMahonization of American wrestling driven away from the arenas our golden girls who truly believed? These were the greatest and most supportive fans of the old circuit days, as still represented by Virginia Aguilar in Mexico, who has been attending *lucha libre* shows for more than 50 years.

Many of us were wondering how long it would take for the crowd to grow excited about the shoot-fighting style. It only took 30 seconds, as people were standing, screaming and applauding during the first amateur match. There were no "steroids" or "boring"

chants as heard routinely on U.S. cards. They were loud throughout and wanted badly to boo the five Japanese competitors, with Fujiwara really playing to the crowd with his heel expressions. Jerry Flynn and Ken Shamrock encouraged "U.S.A." chants prior to their matches, and by the time Bart Vale came out for the main event against Fujiwara, the cheers reached a fever pitch.

But I truly believe the crowd became educated beyond this xenophobia after watching what the Japanese could do in the ring. You never hear a derogatory word from the Japanese toward a U.S. wrestler because of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or the fact our recession has negatively affected their export sales and stock market. Maybe the high price of tickets for Japanese wrestling, the higher inherent ethics of promotions there, the love of wrestling history, the culture, the co-operation between Nikkan and Tokyo Sports (two of the newspapers that cover Japanese wrestling on a daily basis in their sports pages) and the fact the Japanese draw a more educated class of fan over there. Outspoken advocates of the Japanese style in the newsletters (myself included) do not mean to put down American fans. We'll just never behave the same, and thankfully so, or else we would end up like robots.

I think we can expect Americans to applaud after thrilling efforts between rivals in a match, just as we have seen in the Japanese-style performances of Jushin Lyger and Owen Hart. Hopefully, the Steve Williams-Terry Gordy vs. Rick-Scott Steiner feud will produce the same reaction. It's a shame, but no surprise, that WCW is harping on Williams and Gordy downgrading their America citizenship to get the angle over. The American fan is capable of more, and should demand combatants hug or at least shake hands after a match that truly tells a story or is well-executed. One can only dream about what the result would be if American fans could watch weekly tapes of Japanese wrestling, so they could then request a similar product and sportsmanship. Fans should behave better, yet that doesn't mean they have to give up many aspects of their unique American style.

Vale is to be commended for taking a chance on the American crowd in Miami. Future events are being discussed for Tampa and Denver. Lou Thesz would like to bring Nobuhiko Takada's UWF1 shoot-fighting group to the U.S., while Atsushi Onita is hoping to bring the Frontier Martial Arts Wrestling group's style of gore and brawling to Los Angeles May 14 and Tiajuana May 15.

## **Suncoast to air LMLW matches; Cooper hurt**

Suncoast Pro Wrestling promoter Henry Raines will begin showing matches of Howard Brody's Ladies Major League Wrestling beginning in early May.

The LMLW shows were originally taped in March 1990, and featured such stars as Luna Vachon, Taylor Made Medina and The Glamour Girls. Former World Wrestling Federation an-



**Alex Marvez**

nouncers Bruno Sammartino and Bill Caudille handle the play-by-play chores. Raines regularly promotes women's matches on his shows, with Penelope Paradise the current Suncoast women's champion.

**WCW:** The line-up for the War Games pay-per-view show May 17 at the Jacksonville Colliseum (according to *The Wrestling Observer Newsletter*): **The Dangerous Alliance** vs. **Ricky Steamboat-Sting-Nikita Koloff-Barry Windham-Dustin Rhodes**, **Rick-Scott Steiner** vs. **Tatsumi Fujinami-Takayuki Iizuka**, **Tom Zenk** vs. **Brian Pillman** for the WCW light-heavyweight title, **Van Hammer** vs. **J.T. Southern**, **Terry Taylor-Greg Valentine** vs. **The Freebirds** for the U.S. tag-team titles, **Marcus Bagwell** vs. **Scotty Flamingo** (Scott Anthony), **Ron Simmons** vs. **Mr. Hughes**, **Johnny B. Badd** vs. **Chip the Firebreaker** and **Junkyard Dog** vs. **Cactus Jack**. Tickets go on sale at intermission of WCW's April 5 show in Jacksonville.

**Tampa independents:** Eddy Mansfield's International Wrestling Federation debuts in Tampa April 4 with **Blackjack Mulligan** vs. **The Possessor** (Nasty Ned Brady) in the main event...The Monster Factory is offering free wrestling tryouts at 1 p.m. April 5 at the Tampa Sportatorium, 106 North Albany Ave. There will also be a Wrestlemania VIII party at 4 p.m., with the \$19.92 cost covering viewing and buffet...Independent wrestler Jim "The Animal" Cooper underwent back surgery last week, and is out indefinitely. Cooper, who does a George Steele gimmick, injured his back at a WWF television taping after a vicious slam by **Tatonka** (Chris Chavis). At one point, Cooper was partially paralyzed, but is improving daily...Raines teamed with Jerry Flynn to defeat The Southern Posse (Sonny T and Rick Thames) on a Championship Wrestling from Florida show March 26 at Club Fuente in Ruskin. A rematch is slated for April 30.

## **Hogan-Savage Win; McDaniel in NCW**

**John Muse** of Taylor, Mich., attended a World Wrestling Federation show March 29 at The Palace in Auburn Hills, Mich. The following is his report:

1) **Repo Man** defeated **Jim Powers** in 5:53. I didn't get to see the finish, because too many people were walking in front of me. This match sucked eggs. **Grade: D-;** 2) **Owen Hart-Koko B. Ware** defeated **The Beverly Brothers** in 10:53. It appears the Beverlies are losing to everyone. **Grade: C-.** I got rid of my headache during this match, but it came back later; 3) **Crush** defeated **Berserker** with a small package in 4:58. Crush wears no face-paint and is a babyface. You figure. **Grade: D+;** 4) My skull began throbbing again as **The Natural Disasters** defeated **Jim Duggan-Sergeant Slaughter** via disqualification in 10:25. This was the match that put Michigan to sleep. **Grade: F;** 5) **Chris Walker** pinned **Kato** with a bodyblock off the top rope in 16:05. Kato really tried hard, raising the match grade to a D+. Walker does a nice leap frog, and that's about the only good thing I can say about him; 6) **The British Bulldog** pinned **Ted DiBiase** with a small package in 9:20. This was a major dud, with all stalling. DiBiase didn't take too many bumps because of an injured back, and Smith is too top-heavy to take bumps; 7) **Hulk Hogan-Randy Savage** defeated **Ric Flair-Sid Justice** via DQ when **Dr. Harvey Whippleman** hit Hogan with the medicine bag after the Hulkster executed a leg drop onto Flair. The match length was 11:28. There was great heat for the Flair-Savage and Hogan-Sid confrontations. Savage and Flair had their moments, but Hogan and Sid were Hogan and Sid. **Grade: B-.**

**Notes:** I estimated the crowd at about 6,000. This was the worst Titan card I've been to in quite a while.

**Danny Parris** of Spartanburg, S.C., attended a National Championship Wrestling show March 21 in Inman, S.C. The following is his report (Graded in stars on a five-star scale):

1) **Mitch Pruitt** lost to **The Black Scorpion** in 14:20 (\*\*); 2) **David Melton** defeated **Terminator Rex** with a belly-to-belly suplex in 10:52 (\*); 3) **"Texas" Dave Breck** and **Billy Eagle** lost to **Mesa Outlaw** and **Rattlesnake Wesbrook** in 20:37 (\*1/2). Eagle and Breck split up after the match; 4) **Mike Somaini** pinned **Jake Steele** with a small package. Mike, 41, wrestles with multiple sclerosis, which takes a lot of courage; 5) **Johnny B. Good** beat **The Warlock** via disqualification in 9:17, thus Warlock retains the NCW title. **Johnny Eagle** was the last champion, so a phantom title change took place since this group's last card; 6) **Joe Kidd** defeated **Little Road Warrior** in 9:02. The LRW isn't the same one who works Tennessee independents; 7) **Wahoo McDaniel** and **Jay Eagle** won the NCW tag-team titles from **The Hollywood Blonds** in 16:38. A two-star match. **The Fantastics** were the last NCW champs, so yet another phantom title switch prior to this match.

**Notes:** NCW returns to Inman May 23. Attendance was a sold-out 350. This was a fun card, lasting nearly three hours.



## **WCW Fails Test With Steroid Plan**

A wee bit peeved at the WWF? Trust me, Alex, and you readers who surely must be sick of my tirades by now -- last issue's piece was even *stronger* before I edited it. So, I've decided to be calm and rational for a change.

As I was about to say before I was waylaid by half the world, in our rush to condemn the steroid use in the WWF (rightfully so), one would get the impression World Championship Wrestling is squeaky-clean when it comes to its performers not using the juice, gas,

### **Paul Hanlin Jr.**

sauce or whatever else the drug is being called this week.

Have you taken a look at some of WCW's workers while all this steroid hubbub is going on? Here's an honest opinion: We aren't so vocal in our criticism of WCW steroid abuse as we tend to be with the Fed's because WCW has better matches. Can you say big-time *double standard*?

There are guys that I've admired, men that were in line for world title shots, that wound up being revealed to me by friends of mine as heavy steroid users. And it hit me hard, for I was reverting back to my naive stance about bulked-up guys with super wrestling moves.

Enter K. Allen "Don't call me Kip" Frey and *his* steroid testing plan. Note the lack of quotes. Yet, considering the letters to the newsletter editors, the public service announcements currently telecast on WCW shows aren't going over with the hard-core fans at all.

I believe Frey is sincere and wants to give the voluntary testing opinion and incentive every chance. He has to be. But with the boys who are using steroids (a federally banned substance since 1988, need I remind them and this readership), I fear nothing will make them stop. Frey will, eventually, institute mandatory testing.

If it comes to that, then let all the 'roidheads who refuse to submit to one just say "I quit WCW." As a fan of this sport for 20 years next year, I retch every time I hear a guy is forced to put on 20 or 30 pounds to get a push. And it's not just wrestling: It's body-building and American Gladiators, too. Maybe Dave Meltzer has the solution -- guys on steroids have to do clean jobs at every TV taping until they're off them.

Finally wrestlers will either come clean or suffer the inevitable consequences. Now and later. But as long

as we have a society that advocates risks be damned, no one will learn a thing from this gigantic debacle.

I'd like to see WCW drug-less when its pay-per-view crown jewel of the summer (The Great American Bash) drops by July 12, knock on wood, less than a 20-minute train ride from my humble abode. I'd also like to get close to Vanderbilt's women's basketball player Heidi Gillingham. She's 6-8 *sans* heels, with a model's good looks and height that makes Pink Cadillac look like Joe Pesci. What can I say? Ric Flair had a thing for Elizabeth. This unhappily single 6-2 guy has a thing about looking *up* at tall women (the few that are still single, that is, if there are any left at all!).

Asidebar, please. For someone who can be quite vituperative about the Whiff in his own forum, the *Donahue* show was a rare botch job by The Dave. He treated Vince McMahon with kid gloves. If I had the stuff on the WWF that he surely seems to have, I'd be exposing every lie he just told 72 hours earlier on the *Larry King Live* show, and for the past umpteen months and years. Meltzer could have let Vince have it with both barrels, but for *Donahue*, he didn't even bring the rifle. Or a pea shooter.

This is Wrestlemania week, and I can't let it slide without relating to you a few good times. It debuted seven years ago this past Tuesday. I saw it at The Spectrum on closed circuit TV March 31, 1985, and listened to it on radio the following year. How? I tuned into a Chicago station broadcasting from the Rosemont Horizon, one of the tri-sites for WM II (remember the football players-wrestlers battle royal). In 1987, I saw WM III one day late on tape. It was the WWF at its zenith -- the awesome crowd of 90,000; Randy Savage vs. Ricky Steamboat (the best WWF match ever) and that 10 percent PPV buy-rate. I haven't seen one since. Flair vs. Savage will be the best match of the day. I couldn't care less about anything else.

So, here's the deal. If you're still with me after last week's issue, you will not read one mention of steroids or scandals or anything that doesn't go on in the ring in next week's issue. We'll tackle "WCW Saturday Night" with a full-blown review of the latest attempt by the No. 2 guys to compete with the WWF, TV-style. Will it be a hit, or will it go the way of NBC's 17 prior attempts at duplicating a 60-minute type series.

There. I feel much better. Maybe this calm stuff might actually work...

*Paul Hanlin, Three Count's weekly columnist and angry young man, has calmed down for the time being.*



# Referee Switch Dooms Chicana

I know, I know. You're probably thinking I'm here to tell you that another superior week of lucha libre took place March 29 on Galavision's EMLL card.

You're right. Here are the match results:

1) **Oro-Plata-Bronze** (*los techincos*) defeated **El Felino-Comando Ruso-Ponzona** (*los rudos*) in two-of-three falls. This match began with tempers flaring, but to the amazement of everyone, turned into a great scientific battle, with handshakes and technical moves ga-

**Carlos Rey**



lore. The first fall saw Felino completely dominate until Oro came off the ropes with a flying headbutt to gain a pinfall. Bronze used a backward somersault onto Ponzona for another pin, and Plata scored a pinfall on Ruso with the help of Oro. The pace picked up even more in the second fall, with Felino pinning Plata and Ponzona making Bronze submit. Everyone worked very hard in the third fall, especially the three metals. This fall ends with Oro doing a backward flip onto Ruso for the pin and the victory, but the highlight was Bronze's leap from the ring into the rows of seats outside the ring.

2) This brought us something we don't see too much in lucha-style wrestling. **Blue Panther** was being interviewed on his way into Arena Mexico when **Love Machine** (**Art Barr**, who must have "co-incidentally" also been entering the arena simultaneously) saw him and attacked him. That turned into a fantastic brawl. Then we went to the ring, which was won by Machine and partners **Hijo Del Solitario** and **Hijo De Lizmark** over Panther-Jerry "**El Puma**" Estrada-La Fiera. Panther had a lot of help from his partners clobbering Machine in the first fall. When Machine would start to gain the referee, the rudo referee, **Gato Montini**, would interfere. As this was going on, though, Hijo De Lizmark pinned La Fiera. That enabled Machine to make a comeback to force Panther to get counted out of the ring. The Hijos worked on Estrada and Fiera again in the second fall. By this time, Machine and Panther had their masks just about torn off. Machine scored a clean pinfall on Panther, which made the wrestling commission say they would sponsor a mask vs. mask match between the two (which will air within the next couple of weeks).

3) **Los Brazos** (rudos) fought **Rayo De Jalisco Jr-Lizmark-Conan** to a draw. The first fall proved why

each of these wrestlers is a superstar in their own right. Conan pinned **El Brazo de Oro**, Jalisco pinned **El Brazo** and, to everyone's surprise, the skinniest wrestler (**Lizmark**) made the heaviest (**El Brazo de Plata**) submit (**Los Brazos** and **Oro-Plata-Bronze** are not related). The rudos came back in the second fall, with **Brazo de Plata** splashing **Lizmark**, the other **Brazos** making Jalisco submit and Conan getting pinned with a top-rope splash by **Brazo de Plata** after being triple teamed. The third fall went back and forth frequently. Every wrestler did what is called "el lance," which is a head-first leap through the middle rope onto an opponent outside the ring. After that, everyone was unable to answer the bell, so the match was declared a draw.

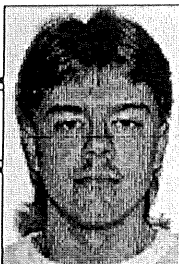
4) This was the long-awaited grudge match between **Perro Aguayo** (seconded by Conan) against **Sangre Chicana** (seconded by La Fiera). This bout was won by Aguayo, but not before he received tons of punishment from the rudos. Chicana attacked Aguayo before the opening bell, but the action in this fall went back and forth. Two things unheard of in the rules of lucha took place in the first fall -- Fiera interfering consistently (which provoked some great brawling between him and Conan at ringside) and Montini's blatant interference, with Gato at one point physically grabbing Aguayo by the hair and arms. Aguayo managed to win the first fall by splashing Chicana and knocking him cold, forcing Montini to count the pin. Aguayo juiced early in the second fall, which stems from his style of brawling. Most luchadores put their hand or arm up to brace themselves when they take a bump into the ringpost. Aguayo doesn't. Montini ejected Conan from ringside, which almost caused a riot. As this was going on, Chicana fouled Aguayo and got the pin. The third fall saw Aguayo get the advantage early, but Montini would not count the pinfall. This was too much for the commission, which, for the first time in history, came to ringside, allowed Conan to return, removed Montini from the match and appointed another official (**Wello Rangel**). This spelled the end for Chicana, as Aguayo cradled him for the pinfall. A truly classic match.

*Carlos Rey has watched lucha libre for more than 10 years, and cannot get enough of the style. He not only writes a weekly column for **Three Count**, but, in addition, has tapes of Galavision shows available. Write to him at 996 West 45th Place, Hialeah FL 33012 for more information. He is hoping to begin receiving tapes of the UWA soon. Look for more details and a review here.*

## How 'Mania VIII Should Be Booked

*If there is anything I like as much as a great Japanese match, it's booking wrestling matches the way I would like to see them. And with Alex's permission, the Japan notes have been moved to the "Briefly" section on Page One this week for the space to book Wrestlemania VIII. At times, my booking will lean in the direction that I think Titan is heading in, not necessarily the direction I would go in. After watching WM VIII, please write in and let me know how my ideas stacked up.*

**John Muse**



1) **Big Boss Man-Virgil-Jim Duggan-Sergeant Slaughter vs. Nasty Boys-Mountie-Repo Man:** This shouldn't be too bad, as long as Slaughter and Duggan stay out of the way. The finish: Boss Man and **Brian Nobbs** are the legal men in. **Jimmy Hart** jumps on Slaughter's back, only to be swatted off by Duggan's two-by-four. **Jerry Saggs** throws the biker helmet to Nobbs, who KO's Boss Man. Nobbs covers Boss Man while Saggs hides the helmet under the apron. Virgil goes in the ring, flips Boss Man on top of Nobbs and dives over the top rope onto Sags. The referee counts to three and the babyfaces win. Hart is carried out by The Nasty Boys.

2) **Owen Hart vs. Skinner:** Keep this match short and it could be good, with Owen carrying it. Hart pins Skinner after a top-rope splash.

3) **Money, Inc. vs. Natural Disasters:** In a pre-match interview, **Ted DiBiase** and **Irwin R. Shyster** are very upset about having to defend their titles without Hart. Saggs comes in and whispers something to I.R.S., which changes Money Inc.'s attitude from concern to confidence. DiBiase and I.R.S. sell until the finish, when all four men are left in the ring at the same time. The Disasters are whipped into each other. Unfortunately, the referee gets sandwiched in the process. **Earthquake** starts reviving the referee while DiBiase battles **Typhoon**. I.R.S. leaves the ring and gets the helmet that Saggs left under the ring apron in the opening match. I.R.S. knocks 'Quake out of the ring with the helmet and then helps DiBiase KO Typhoon to gain the win.

4) **Davey Boy Smith vs. The Berserker:** The less said about this match, the better. Smith pins Berserker clean in the middle of the ring.

5) **Ric Flair vs. Randy Savage:** Easily the most anticipated match on the show. Hopefully, Vince McMahon will give these guys enough time to put on a classic.

Scenario A: The most likely finish sees Flair pinning Savage after **Curt Hennig** interferes. Somewhere in there, Liz will slap Flair to make Titan fans happy. But, what if...

Scenario B: Liz turns heel. Savage is pounding on Flair most of the match (doesn't everyone?). The referee is

distracted by Hennig and Savage tells Liz to get the ringside bell for him. Liz gets the bell and Savage reaches out for it with his head turned so he can keep an eye on Flair. Liz nails Savage in the head with it and Flair scores the winning pinfall. Liz leaves with Flair, but not before removing her ring and dropping it on the unconscious Savage. Flair and Liz do a backstage interview complete with champagne and annulment papers for "**Mean**" **Gene Okerlund** to give Savage when he wakes up.

6) **Shawn Michaels vs. El Matador:** Decent match, obvious finish. Michaels pins Matador. After the bout, **Howard Finkel** declares, "Shawn Michaels has left the building."

7) **Jake Roberts vs. The Undertaker:** This bout should have great heat and a not so great work rate. I would put the emphasis on the urn or what is in it. Undertaker plays to the urn like it controls his every move. Finish sees 'Taker in control until **Paul Bearer** "accidentally" drops the urn, leaving the 'Taker dazed. Roberts seizes the opportunity to DDT the 'Taker for a quick three count. Bearer and 'Taker hint at a break-up.

8) **Bret Hart vs. Roddy Piper:** If Hart has his working shoes on, this could be OK. The finish: Hart has Piper in the sharp shooter. Piper fights it and gets to the ropes. Piper is noticeably limping on that "bad" ankle he has as a result of the move. Piper continues on, but later does a leapfrog and lands wrong. As Piper gets up off the mat, Hart levels him with a lariat for the pin and Intercontinental title. Piper and Hart shake hands, and Bret helps Roddy to the back and into an ambulance to have the ankle checked. When the ambulance leaves, Michaels jumps Bret and laves him laying. Michaels looks into the camera and says, "Shawn Michaels has left the building...Not!"

9) **Tatonka vs. Rick Martel:** See Smith vs. Berserker match. Tatonka pins Martel. Who really cares?

10) **Hulk Hogan vs. Sid Justice:** In his pre-match interview, Hulk thanks the fans and says he looks forward to posing for one last time with his Hulkamaniacs. Hopefully, whomever scripted the **Hogan-Ultimate Warrior** match at **Wrestlemania VI** will work the same magic in this match. The finish: Both guys kick out of the others finishing maneuvers and brawl to the arena floor. Sid tries a power bomb outside the ring, but Hogan backdrops him and executes a leg drop. Justice gets counted out of the ring. When Hogan starts posing, Justice and some other heels jump Hogan to ruin his moment of glory. Just when things look bleak, the Warrior, without make-up, does a run-in to save the day. Warrior and Hogan embrace and pose together while fireworks explode.

Personally, I wouldn't use Warrior, but I have the feeling they might. Why else would the WWF start mentioning him again. I also think Hogan will pin Sid, but I would never let someone pin my monster heel when I need him to draw fans over the summer. Whatever does happen had better be good. With all of the bad publicity surrounding Titan Sports, Vince has to come through with something positive. Next column, we'll go back to the land of the rising sun.



# Spotlight on: Jim Wilson

*Three Count* could not have possibly picked a better time to do an interview with **Jim Wilson** than in the conclusion of this two-part interview. Wilson, who gained national attention on *20/20* in 1985 with allegations of sexual harassment by a homosexual promoter blackballing him from the wrestling business, is about to step into the spotlight again. Wilson is scheduled to speak March 31 at a news conference in New York City concerning those same allegations and his thoughts on the unionization of pro wrestlers. Slated to appear at the news conference are *A Current Affair*, *Hard Copy* and the *CBS Evening News*.

Wilson, who stopped wrestling in 1974, appeared on *Ric Carter's WrestleTalk* radio show on *KLAV-AM* in Las Vegas March 1, and the following is a transcript of what was said (**Craig White** served as a guest co-host). Some of Wilson's claims, as seen last issue, are quite essentric and outrageous. However, this interview provides an insight on subjects still prevalent in wrestling today and shows what wrestling fans can expect to hear from Wilson as the mainstream media continues to focus on pro wrestling.

**RC:** We were talking about your movements as far as being involved in wrestling and getting behind the wrestlers, as the promoters have been screwing you guys around. You mentioned several times an individual called T-Bolt (Thunderbolt Patterson). You guys have been working for several years trying to get a union together.

**JW:** That's true. When we initially started back in 1974, that was one of the genesis's of our whole promotion -- to make it a better situation for the guys -- because of what we had been through in our careers, what was out there and what everyone else had. In my day and age, which is almost 20 years ago, it wasn't as big a business financially as it is now, but there were still millions and millions of dollars coming in. And nothing was coming back to the guys as far as the legitimate kind of money. Promoters aren't the ones in the ring sacrificing their body. There are no benefits down the road (or wrestlers) once their career is over, either by design or desire. (A union) is something we tried to get going that was ahead of its time. Unfortunately, promoters have the control and power that if they found out something was going on, they would do everything they could to stop it and break it up. There was a constant tug of war going on to generate (a union) and get it going, and the off-shoot of that now is trying to get something from a medical and safety standpoint along the lines of a state athletic commission.

**CW:** Jim, I first heard you mention this on a talk show that originated from Los Angeles. It was yourself and Eddy Mansfield. They did a split-screen thing with Lou Thesz. Do you remember that particular show, and what heat did you guys draw from that? I remember at that time you were already blackballed. Did that further that status for you?

**JW:** Well, that was after the *20/20* show. That was on *America Talks Back* with Stan Seigel out of Hollywood. They brought Thesz in out of a studio in Nashville. He had been back doing a promotion with Danny Davis of the Nashville brass. I had gone up there for a short period of time to work for Lou, and he ended up cheating me out of some money he promised me. So I quit. The next time I saw him was on TV, which was a surprise to us. He came on and tried to take the position of promoters essentially. People were calling in from all over the country. He got so embarrassed, he put sunglasses on and walked off the show.

**CW:** He did a complete work, and it didn't sell to anybody that was halfway knowledgeable.

**JW:** Absolutely not.

**RC:** You're pushing for this union for wrestling and boxing. Georgia does not presently have a commission whatsoever?

**JW:** They have an athletic commission. They have a boxing commission. We want to add wrestling to it. It's not a union per se. It's just the bare essentials as far as safety and medial protection are

concerned. I go back to the Ray Gunkel situation (the former Atlanta promoter who died in the ring in 1972 from a heart attack). If there would have been a doctor in the house and had a physical been required, they probably wouldn't have let him wrestle in the first place. And had there been an emergency truck out back with medical equipment and all, Ray might be alive today.

RC: Nevada has a state athletic commission which requires those things. It requires a doctor and ringside, an ambulance be present, and a physical before going into the ring, so if your blood pressure is high, your not allowed to wrestle. You feel not having these things contributed to Ray Gunkel's death?

JW: Ray was almost 50 at the time. Of course, if you take care of yourself physically, you can still enter the ring and perform. He let himself get overweight to a pretty good degree, and it is very possible (a commission) would not have let him in the ring. But even if he had (passed a physical), there is a good chance he could still be alive. They could have put him on a respirator perhaps when he went into his heart condition.

CW: Has anyone else died because of similar circumstances, because of neglect and the second-class citizenry that wrestlers have occupied?

JW: Well, there's been other deaths in the ring. I don't have them all documented. Of course, Ox Baker was involved in this one, and from that point on, his gimmick or hold was the heart punch. When I broke into wrestling in Georgia, the Torres brothers used to come through here quite frequently. They were pretty well established and popular. I believe out in Nebraska Ox happened to have a match with Alberto and he died. That was two deaths they were trying to sell with this heart punch of Ox Baker's. Any state where there is not a wrestling commission is contributory to a degree of any injuries or deaths that occur because of the lack of physicals and requirements and so forth, and the fact a doctor in the house may be able to save somebody, along with the medical truck and the equipment in it. Today, with the billions of dollars wrestling generates now, it is an outrage and a crime against

this country that there isn't (a medical commission) on a national level, especially with all the steroids, which are against the law, and the threat that's lurking -- AIDS. With all the blood being splattered in the ring and the guys rolling around together, who knows who's got it and who can pass it.

I definitely feel the welfare of the performers is looked down upon as quite trivial and unnecessary as far as the promoters are concerned. In fact, it's the opposite. (The promoters) have gone to every length, means and extent, which have been considerable, to pay off people through the system in these states to deregulate or keep (a commission) out. Even up to Washington DC, where there is a federal consent judgement that was put into place in 1956. It is a known fact the NWA has paid big-time money to high-priced law firms to keep this thing covered up and out of public scrutiny.

CW: Would you give credence to Superstar Billy Graham's allegation that the FBI has considered investigating Vince McMahon?

JW: I would certainly give it credence. I'm not personally aware of it, but if Billy says there is an impending possible investigation, then yeah. Based on how they and Ted Turner are in conducting affairs down here, as far as the drugs and everything else, I would think that would be a distinct likelihood.

CW: From what I gather, I don't think you think Ted Turner is much different than Vince McMahon.

JW: Absolutely not. (Turner) is the most hypocritical, contradicting person on earth that I know. This business about being Man of the Year is just a situation, among many others that he touts...He's been the big payoff guy down here in the state of Georgia to keep this bill from becoming reality because of his greed. What else could it be when he's got the (Atlanta) Hawks and (Atlanta) Braves, and they're all on million dollar contracts with benefits? Now, there saying we're not going to treat the wrestlers any differently. That's a joke. That's blasphemy.

CW: I heard Jim Ross say that the other day.

JW: Yeah, Jim Ross is working for

(Turner).

RC: In some other pro sports, they have major medical benefits. Pro wrestling doesn't. What type of medical coverage would you like to see involved?

JW: Well, the main thing we've been pushing for on a state-wide level is that the job gets done. If you leave it up to the promoter, which is the rhetoric (the promoters) say when anyone starts putting it up at a state-wide level, they would say, "Well, we police ourselves. We look after our guys." And as you know, that's a bunch of garbage. Just the fact that someone is able to get a physical and there's a doctor in the house and emergency medical personnel on hand...That's a step in the right direction. On the broader scale of things, I played pro football for seven years, so when they say they can't get insurance for the wrestlers, that's a bunch of garbage. If you can get it for pro football and hockey players, you can certainly get it for the wrestlers. In the state of New York, I believe they require that if there is a death in the ring, a \$100,000 death benefit is given. And if there is any kind of medical work that needs to be done, there is at least a summary protection of \$7,500 if you get hurt in the ring. Obviously, where this needs to go is to an organization on behalf of the performers themselves in the form of a union or player's organization. That's what (the promoters) have been fighting us about all these years.

RC: You talk about these different types of pensions. Every sport has that except for two sports -- wrestling and boxing. The boxers and the wrestlers are the stoolies, making money for the promoters. Do you think there will be an outcry in boxing over this?

JW: Well, I was thinking in California they were trying to implement something for the boxers. I don't know whether it got into place. It was based on the number of matches someone had and the rounds they went. It was some kind of a participatory arrangement from promoters and the guys themselves. But, yeah, at some point there will have to be (an outcry). (Heavyweight boxing champion) Evander Holyfield has been pushing for an investigation at a Congressional level from a boxing standpoint, because of the very small control of the market. That's not really the way it's supposed to be, but it's the way it is. It's the same situation in the wrestling business. You know, things just keep peaking and all this stuff comes out, the drug abuse and hypocrisy about money being made, and the complete and total denial of the performer's position has got to come forward. Maybe some of these guys who aren't tied to the promoters any more for their livelihood (can speak out)...That's what happened to me. That's what happened to other guys that stood up to them -- we're no longer in the business. Maybe the guys outside the business can make something happen for the guys that come behind them.

## **Graham Files WWF Lawsuit**

By ALEX MARVEZ  
Three Count Editor

Former World Wrestling Federation champion "Superstar" Billy Graham filed suit against the promotion March 27. The exact charges of the suit were unavailable at press time.

Graham, 48, suffers from avascular necrosis, the disintegration of the body's joints. Medical links have proven the disease is connected with long-time anabolic steroid abuse. Graham is also sterile, another condition he says stems from 20 years of steroid use.

Graham, who is considered the forerunner of steroid abuse within wrestling, entered a Los Angeles hospital March 27 to have his artificial left hip replaced because it had worn down. One of Graham's lungs partially collapsed during surgery. Coupled with his refusal to take a blood transfusion, Graham is expected to leave the hospital later this week.

Graham began making noises about filing a lawsuit against the WWF in August 1990. He gained national publicity in July 1991 or testifying at the trial of Dr. George Zahorian, who was convicted on eight felony counts of illegally distributing steroids to wrestlers. Graham attempted to settle with the WWF in the months after the trial, but could not come to an agreement.

Graham has recently appeared on *A Current Affair* and *D onahue* to discuss the WWF and alleged allegations of steroid abuse within the company. Graham has also spoken outwardly about homosexual sexual harassment by members of the front-office toward wrestlers.

**Next issue:** As you can see, we have expanded to 12 pages. This change will likely be permanent, but it really depends on how much news is going on during the week. Obviously, with Wrestlemania VIII and WCW's Saturday Night show debuting over the weekend, next week will be 12 pages as well. Also next week, more on the **Bob Dhue** appointment as WCW President, news from **Dore De Quattro's** news conference, the return of the letters pages, and the usual writings of **Paul Hanlin** and **Carlos Rey**. Next week's issue will likely be mailed April 8, as this an extremely busy weekend for me, between my 21st birthday April 3, the University of Florida's Orange and Blue football game (which I must staff) April 4, Wrestlemania party at my house April 5 and the usual ramblings at school. Enjoy.

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**Three Count Professional Wrestling Newsletter©**  
**P.O.Box 12795**  
**Gainesville, FL 32604-0795**